



State of Connecticut
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE MINNIE GONZALEZ
3RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 4039
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
TELEPHONE
CAPITOL PHONE: (860) 240-8585
TOLL FREE: 1-800-842-8267
FAX: (860) 240-0206
E-MAIL: Minnie.Gonzalez@cga.ct.gov

MAJORITY WHIP AT LARGE

MEMBER
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
JUDICIAL COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

March 7, 2012

To: Public Health Committee

From: Rep. Minnie Gonzalez

RE: Testimony Support Of HB 5314 An Act Concerning The Use Of Mercury In Dentistry

Good Morning Chairwomen Rittter, Co-Chair Gerrata and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, My name is Luz Osuba and I'm here testifying on behalf of Representative Minnie Gonzalez.

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB# 5243, AN ACT CONCERNING THE USED OF MERCURY IN DENTISTRY.

This bill seeks to eliminate the use of mercury in any proportion in dental filling. Although a solid causal relationship has not been established between the used of mercury amalgam filling and direct detrimental health effects, I believe we need to remove this source of mercury from entering patients and the environment. Mercury enters into the environment in many ways, on way is mercury vapor from filing that is inhaled into the lungs and eliminated in urine that eventually ends up in the sea. Fish, which are the primary source of mercury poisoning, adsorb and are contaminated by the mercury and are consumed by animal and humans alike.

I support this bill because my constituents and those that live in many of our cities already shoulder most of the burden of environmental pollution. There are many abandoned and polluted manufacturing sites across the state due to Connecticut's industrial history with large factories building that were built mostly in the largest cities.

The result is many environmental pollutants concentrated in cities like Hartford that are proven to be detrimental to human health. Pollutants leaching from the building and the soil under them disproportionately affect urban dwellers. Add to that thousands of chemicals introduced to the environment through commerce, and the need for legislation such as this is apparent.

Mercury poisoning in the human body causes many negative neurological effects including vision, hearing and speech problems as well as issues with coordination and balance. That is why it is very important to eliminate the use of this substance. Dentists and patients have a variety of options to choose from when repairing damage of filling cavities so the discontinued use of mercury should not cause a hardship for either.

While it would benefit all, the elimination of mercury amalgam fillings, especially because they are placed directly in the mouth, is especially important for my constituents that daily are exposed to higher levels of environmental pollution than those living farther away from the cities. I urge the Public Health Committee to support this bill.

Thank you.

Minnie Gonzalez
State Representative
3rd District